

Appl. No. 10/050,246
Amendment dated May 26, 2004
Response to Notice of Allowance dated March 1, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of Application

Claims 1-8, 13, 15, 19, 23-24 and 27-36 are pending in the present application. The Examiner has allowed these claims in the Notice of Allowance mailed on October 16, 2003. Claims 37-56 have been cancelled by the Examiner as a result of an Examiner's amendment.

Amendments to the Claims

As already discussed, claims 1-8, 13, 19, 23-24 and 27-36 are allowed. By way of this response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 4 and 27 to correct for minor typographical errors. In addition, Applicants have amended claim 35 to be dependent on claim 27 or 28. Applicants submit that these amendments do not affect allowability of the claims. With respect to newly added claims 57-67, these claims are directly or indirectly dependent on allowed claims 27 or 28. These claims are therefore also allowable. Applicants further submit that the amendments do not require a substantial amount of additional work on the part of the Office. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request consideration and entry of the amendments.

Payment of Issue and Publication Fees

Applicants, in response to the Notice of Allowance, authorize payment of the issue and publication fees. A completed "Part B – Fee(s) Transmittal" and an extra copy are attached herewith.

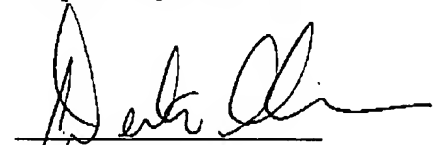
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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. Since the issue and publication fees have been authorized, issuance of the Patent is respectfully requested.

Date: May 26, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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